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Authorizing Defense Procurement and Research and Development, and Military Pay

SPEECH
OF

HON. ROBERT L. LEGGETT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 1966

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill S. 2950, to authorize appropriations during the fiscal year 1967 for procurement of aircraft, missiles, naval vessels, and tracked combat vehicles, and research, development, test, and evaluation for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

Mr. LEGGETT. Mr. Chairman and Members, we are here today to approve a $17.858 billion American defense procurement bill for fiscal year 1967.

Our great chairman from South Carolina is today pioneering once again a very modest step and inroad on Executive civilian-military authority which has been assumed without much remonstrance from the Congress over the past many years.

As I read the amendments made by our committee, after diligent consideration and cogitation, we have really very modestly affected the proposed bill.

There is $19.9 million for a much needed light observation helicopter.

There is $20 million for a much needed airborne TV system over in Saigon, which was pioneered by my colleague from Michigan.

There is $55 million for a new IMI, to make the SR–71, developed by the CIA, a truly useful instrument of defense policy.

There is $51.2 million for the CX–2, in a critical new capability to accelerate our air medical evacuation capability. I might point out in this respect that we are still returning our men stateside to their homes, when they are injured in old Convairs and delapidated under-capability aircraft.

There is $167.9 million for the Nike X, a much needed anti-ICBM capability.

There is $258.3 million for two nuclear DLGN's, one of which was authorized last year at $130.5 million.

There is $62.8 million for Nike X research.

There is $142.7 million for Poseidon research, to make the Polaris capability what it was intended to be.

And there is $167.7 million for the MOL, AMSA, and the F–111–A and V/STOL.

That is a total of about $815 million new authorization.

The amounts of money the committee recommends as additions to the bill comprise but 5 percent of the total legislation, but the areas in which the committee urges such emphasis and concentration I believe are of critical importance.

It is regrettable, I believe, that there is not more rapport between the very able Members and leadership and staff of our committee and the Department of Defense.

I believe the committee report, filed with the bill, is one of the monumental reports that has been filed during my service in the past 4 years in the Congress. I certainly commend it to every Member, to read diligently.

The fact that the committee must go to the mat, so to speak, to affect the budget under the control of the committee, allegedly after critical scrutinizing, study and review, a mere 5 percent, indicates the degree of power which has been lost by this Congress to affect this very critical instrument of American policy and our very existence.

I want to commend the chairman for the very able leadership which he has given to our committee over the last 2 years. We need you in the future, and our committee is 100 percent behind your able leadership.

MORI/CDF

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